



### **Division Guideline #3**

**Date:**                    **Created April 13, 2011**  
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**Title:**                    **Group Home Staffing**

**Application:**        **Community Providers, State-Operated Waiver Programs, Regional Offices, and Provider Relations Unit**

This guideline applies to group home staff coverage as required for ensuring an individual's safety, health, and well-being.

Staffing ratios are designed to allow ongoing support of an individual's habilitation objectives. Any objectives requiring a specific staffing ratio to complete should clearly state that requirement in the Individual Support Plan.

Staff should not take a meal or breaks at the same time as other direct care staff on the same shift within the same home.

When an individual's plan specifies that he or she has the necessary skills to have time without staff oversight, staff are not required to be present. Examples include – family outings, independent recreational and work activities, a specified time in the group home (i.e. 30 minutes to an hour) etc.

Staff meals or breaks should not occur when an individual's safety may be at an elevated risk or as identified in their plan as a time when specific support or supervision is necessary. The following are examples, but should not be considered an exhaustive list:

- Meal times: monitoring to decrease risk of choking.
- Bath time: monitoring to decrease risk of falls.
- Transfers: appropriate staffing necessary to transfer an individual should be identified in the plan and the amount of staff necessary to safely accomplish this should be present.
- Medication administration time: monitoring to decrease risk of medication errors.
- Time in the community: supervision levels for time in the community should be specified in the plan and included in the overall staffing ratio within the home.
- Medical or behavioral crisis is occurring: monitoring to ensure consumer safety.

Staff scheduled to provide support for an individual that are on break, meal or other, should be considered as continuing to actively meet the required staffing pattern ratios. Additional personnel do not need to be scheduled to cover meals and breaks to meet the staffing ratios except as specified. Staff are not required to remain within the home they are supporting, when taking a meal or other breaks, but should remain close enough to the home to be able to respond immediately to any emergency situation.

*This guideline will be reviewed and updated annually, if needed.*